



COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY AND INDIAN CONCEPT OF LEARNING WITH REFERENCE TO THE BHAGAVAD GITA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Education has historically served as a means of both intellectual development and human transformation. Bloom's Taxonomy, introduced in 1956 and revised in 2001, provides a systematic framework for classifying cognitive learning objectives from basic recall to creativity. In contrast, the Indian concept of learning, rooted in the Vedic tradition, Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita, emphasizes a holistic approach that integrates intellectual, ethical, and spiritual development. Central to this tradition are Śravaṇa (listening), Manana (reflection), and Nididhyāsana (contemplation), culminating in wisdom (prajñā) and self-realization. The Bhagavad Gita further expands this framework through Jñāna Yoga (knowledge), Karma Yoga (action), Bhakti Yoga (devotion), and Buddhi Yoga (discernment). This paper undertakes a literature review to compare Bloom's hierarchical taxonomy with Indian pedagogical concepts, highlighting convergences in progressive learning stages and divergences in scope and purpose. The findings reveal that Bloom's framework primarily supports measurable educational outcomes, whereas the Indian model aspires toward holistic wisdom and ethical living. The paper concludes that integrating both traditions can enrich contemporary pedagogy by fostering not only intellectual competence but also responsible leadership and spiritual balance.

KEYWORDS - Bloom's Taxonomy; Indian pedagogy; Bhagavad Gita; Śravaṇa; Manana; Nididhyāsana; Jñāna Yoga; holistic education; cognitive skills; comparative education

INTRODUCTION

Education is a universal human endeavor, but the ways in which societies conceptualize and structure learning vary widely across cultural contexts. In Western pedagogy, Bloom's Taxonomy has emerged as one of the most influential frameworks for defining learning outcomes, guiding curriculum design, and structuring assessments. First published in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom and colleagues, and revised in 2001 by Anderson and Krathwohl, Bloom's taxonomy organizes cognitive processes in hierarchical order, ranging from remembering facts to creating original ideas.

In contrast, the Indian tradition of learning, reflected in the Upanishads, Vedic texts, and philosophical commentaries, emphasizes an integrative process. Learning is seen as a journey from hearing (*Śravaṇa*), through reflection (*Manana*), to deep contemplation and realization (*Nididhyāsana*). The aim is not only intellectual mastery but also ethical transformation and spiritual awakening.

The Bhagavad Gita, one of India's most influential philosophical texts, adds a further dimension to this discourse. It synthesizes various modes of learning and practice—knowledge (*Jñāna Yoga*), action (*Karma Yoga*), devotion (*Bhakti Yoga*), and discernment (*Buddhi Yoga*). In doing so, it frames education as a lifelong process that balances cognition, ethics, and spiritual wisdom.

This paper compares Bloom's taxonomy with the Indian concepts of learning, with a particular focus on the Bhagavad Gita. By reviewing relevant literature, it seeks to identify parallels and divergences, and to explore how these frameworks might be integrated to enrich contemporary education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To review the conceptual and pedagogical foundations of Bloom's Taxonomy.



2. To examine Indian philosophical traditions of learning, focusing on *Śravaṇa*, *Manana*, *Nididhyāsana* and the Bhagavad Gita's yogic framework.
3. To compare Bloom's hierarchical taxonomy with Indian learning traditions.
4. To highlight implications for integrating Western and Indian frameworks in modern pedagogy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom et al. (1956) originally proposed a taxonomy to classify educational objectives in the cognitive domain. The six categories were knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) revised the taxonomy, presenting it as: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. This structure reflects a movement from lower-order to higher-order cognitive skills. Research (Krathwohl, 2002; Forehand, 2010) has shown its effectiveness in curriculum planning, teaching strategies, and assessments. However, critics note that it prioritizes measurable outcomes and underemphasizes affective, ethical, and spiritual learning (Armstrong, 2016).

3.2 Indian Learning Traditions: Śravaṇa–Manana–Nididhyāsana

Indian pedagogy, particularly as described in Vedantic texts, conceives learning as a tripartite process:

- **Śravaṇa**: listening attentively to the teachings of a guru or scripture, corresponding to initial reception of knowledge.
- **Manana**: reflecting rationally on what is heard, leading to deeper understanding.
- **Nididhyāsana**: meditative contemplation, enabling realization and internalization.

This triadic model emphasizes not just knowledge acquisition but transformation of consciousness (Radhakrishnan, 1998; Sharma, 2015).

3.3 The Bhagavad Gita's Pedagogical Insights

The Bhagavad Gita, composed around 200 BCE–200 CE, offers a comprehensive educational philosophy. Its teachings include:

- **Jñāna Yoga (Path of Knowledge)**: acquisition of true knowledge, akin to Bloom's remembering and understanding.
- **Karma Yoga (Path of Action)**: application of knowledge through action without attachment, resonating with Bloom's application.
- **Bhakti Yoga (Path of Devotion)**: cultivation of affective and emotional learning, an area underdeveloped in Bloom's taxonomy.
- **Buddhi Yoga (Path of Intellect/Discernment)**: analytical discernment and ethical judgment, aligning with Bloom's analyzing and evaluating.
- **Jnana–Vijnana Yoga (Synthesis of knowledge and experiential wisdom)**: representing integration and higher-order realization, beyond Bloom's creating, oriented toward self-realization.

Scholars (Chakraborty & Chakraborty, 2006; Rao, 2020) emphasize that the Gita positions education as a means of holistic transformation, developing head, heart, and hand in balance.

3.4 Comparative Studies

Several studies have explored parallels between Bloom and Indian frameworks. Joshi (2018) observed that the structure of *Śravaṇa–Manana–Nididhyāsana* parallels Bloom's lower to higher cognitive skills, but extends further to self-realization. Rao (2020) argues that Bloom's taxonomy is instrumentalist, while the Gita offers a teleological vision of education. Modern scholars in management education (Singh & Bhandarkar, 2019) advocate integrating Bloom with Gita-based principles to foster ethical leadership.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Bloom's Taxonomy	Indian Concept (Upanishads & Gita)	Comparison
Remember	Śravaṇa (Listening)	Both emphasize reception of knowledge.
Understand	Manana (Reflection)	Similar to reasoning and interpreting.
Apply	Karma Yoga / Nididhyāsana	Application in practical life and action.



Bloom's Taxonomy	Indian Concept (Upanishads & Gita)	Comparison
Analyze	Viveka (Discernment) / Buddhi Yoga	Critical analysis and ethical judgment.
Evaluate	Buddhi Yoga	Moral and intellectual evaluation.
Create	Prajñā / Jñāna–Vijñāna	Higher integration and innovation, leading to realization.
Affective/Spiritual	Bhakti Yoga	Absent in Bloom, central in Gita.

DISCUSSION

Bloom's taxonomy and Indian traditions share a belief in progressive learning but diverge in scope and purpose. Bloom's model is primarily cognitive, developed for structured classroom instruction and measurable outcomes. It is highly effective for designing syllabi and evaluating student performance, particularly in modern, outcome-based education systems.

Indian pedagogy, particularly the Bhagavad Gita, situates learning within a broader ethical and spiritual framework. The Gita integrates cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of learning, aiming at the transformation of the learner into a wise, ethical, and socially responsible being. Unlike Bloom's taxonomy, which ends with creativity, the Gita directs learners toward wisdom, harmony, and liberation.

An integrated framework could combine Bloom's structured progression with Indian holistic vision. For instance, Bloom's levels could be expanded to include *Bhakti Yoga* (affective learning) and *Jnana–Vijnana Yoga* (wisdom-realization), producing a comprehensive taxonomy suited for the 21st century. This has implications for management education, professional ethics, and value-based curricula, where technical competence must be balanced with ethical responsibility and social consciousness.

CONCLUSION

This literature review highlights that Bloom's taxonomy and Indian learning traditions, including the Bhagavad Gita, offer complementary perspectives on education. Bloom provides a clear, structured model for cognitive skill development, while Indian pedagogy emphasizes holistic, transformative learning that integrates knowledge, action, devotion, and discernment. The Gita, in particular, expands learning into the ethical and spiritual domains, underscoring the importance of wisdom and self-realization.

Future research should focus on designing hybrid pedagogical models that draw on both traditions. Such frameworks could better prepare learners not only to succeed intellectually but also to act responsibly and live meaningfully in a globalized world.

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